

SUMMARY

MATO LEŠĆAN AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO CHURCH MUSIC

Mato Leščan is a Croatian composer, educator, organist, polyvalent music personality whose significance is closely related to the field of church music. This paper is conceived as a kind of macro portrait, starting from the broader, general picture to the particular: after reviewing the biographical data, the author, through selected aspects, profiles Leščan as a (re)productive artist and a scholar. What follows is the analytical presentation of the *Croatian Mass for three-part mixed choir and organ*, composed to the text of standardised translation in the Croatian edition of *The Roman Missal*. The time of origin is unknown. The mass form is mostly through-composed, and the harmony is dominated by modality, which makes the colour element an essential means of expression. Harmonic and polyphonic texture is combined with a slight predominance of the polyphonic, manifested through the frequent use of imitative voice entries, but its basic feature is balance. The rhythm is complex and varied, and frequent changes in measure are conditioned by the poetic meter. The choir and the organ are equal partners, the organ part played on its own sounds like a prelude: the organ presents a musical theme independently; it also prepares voice entries through intermezzo or describes a newly sung text, while its usual accompanying role is just occasional. This Mass, strongly marked Leščan's style, is a valuable contribution to Croatian liturgical and concert choir literature. The final part of the paper contextualises Leščan's appearance in the 20th century Croatian music, emphasising his contribution to the renewed liturgy and church music in general.

Key words: Mato Leščan, biography, bibliography, *Hrvatska misa* (Croatian Mass), 20th century Croatian music